which former Columbus resident wrote 30 books and a Tony-award winning Broadway show, penned six New Yorker covers, had one of his short stories adapted into a movie directed by and starring Ben Stiller, and brought fame to one of the city's ghosts.

If you answered "James Thurber," you're correct. Though he was was one of the most accomplished writers to come out of Columbus, Thurber's work is rarely taught as part of the school curriculum. To promote one of our city's great talents, the staff of the Thurber House is planning to bring Thurber's work directly to the public throughout 2019 as part of a yearlong citywide celebration commemorating the 125th anniversary of Thurber's birth and the 35th anniversary of the opening of the Thurber House.

Stepping into the Thurber House is like stepping back in time—intentionally so. The house was restored in 1984 to a look like period home from the nineteen-teens, the years James Thurber and his family lived there. Though the house reflects a bygone era, Thurber's voice still resonates. "His humor is timeless," said Anne Touvell, Deputy Director of the Thurber House. "I believe it still stands up today as well as it ever did. He writes about human nature, men, women, and dogs... And he nails human nature with dead-on accuracy."

The year of Thurber will kickoff in December with the awarding of the Thurber Prize for American Humor, the top humor-writing award in the country.

"We thought 'why don't we bring the Thurber Prize back to Columbus during [Thurber's] birthday week and let our city get to celebrate this multi-legend?'" said Laurie Lathan, Executive Director of the Thurber House. The event will feature a reading by the 2018's top three finalists and the announcement of the winner.

Following the announcement of the prize, the Thurber House will collaborate with Columbus cultural institutions to showcase Thurber’s vast body of work throughout 2019.

"What we're trying to do is find innovative ways to get that out into the community," Lathan said. The main library will be showing a film adaptation of a children's book, The Last Flower, that Thurber wrote for his daughter. Other projects in the works include performances by the Thurber Theater Troupe in schools and retirement centers, and some yet-to-be announced projects in conjunction with the Columbus Museum of Art, The Ohio State University, and ProMusica. The year of Thurber will also highlight the cultural contribution the Thurber House provides this city every year.

"We have year-round programming for both adults and children. That's one of the things that makes us unique," Touvell said. The Thurber House regularly hosts readings featuring local and national authors through their Evenings with Authors and Summer Literary Picnics series. In November, astronaut Scott Kelly will be there sharing his new memoir about the year he spent in space.

Each year the Thurber House invites two writers—one adult and one children's author—to spend a month as a writer-in-residence. According to Thurber's own account in his 1933 story The Night the Ghost Got In, these writers may not be alone while they're staying at the Thurber House.